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Open Space Committee Minutes 01/05/2005

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
 MINUTES FOR JANUARY 5, 2005

Present: Ann LeRoyer, David White, Adam Pachter, Joey Glushko, Michele Hassler,
 Leslie Mayer, Elizabeth Karpati, Roly Chaput

- I. The minutes from the December 1st meeting were reviewed and accepted as revised. Copies were sent to all committee members and Alice Norman. Roly Chaput will take minutes of the January meeting. Michelle Hassler will do the same for the February meeting and Elizabeth Karpati will do March.

II. Projects and announcements

Members reviewed a rough draft of the 2004 annual report prepared by Ann LeRoyer.

Material from last year's report was looked at for inclusion in the current report and updates were suggested.

The new web site address for the Open Space Plan was noted.

Site management plans are being upgraded to create a working document for various town departments to utilize in the coming year.

A report of the action taken by the Board of Selectmen on the Knowles Farm Development was reported by Ann LeRoyer. The Board approved the roadway plan acting as Arlington's Board of Survey. Several attendees at the meeting commented on the loss of open space and possible safety issues due to location of the entranceway to the site. There was little attempt by the Board to encourage the owner to consider any historic aspects of the site. However, the developer was agreeable to including a reference of the farm in the project. He still must meet with the Arlington Historic Commission. The OSC decided to write another letter to the developer after he meets with the Historic Commission.

Ann LeRoyer reminded members of the 187 Lowell Street subdivision project of a hearing at the January 10th meeting of the Board of Selectmen and urged them to attend to show support for continued denial of development of the site.

Ann LeRoyer reported that bollards have finally been installed at Ryder Street and big rocks placed to prevent illegal parking on the bike path during events at the Sports Center.

David White reported that the Friends of Great Meadows is on the agenda of the Board of Selectmen on January 10th. They will discuss the first annual report prepared by the Friends, highlights of the year and future projects in 2005.

Elizabeth Karpati passed around a flyer concerning the sale of the St. Jerome's church property in East Arlington. Michelle Hassler said the Cemetery Commission has it on their upcoming agenda. Joey Glushko stated that several potential bidders have contacted the Planning Department about the property.

III. Management Plan for Spy Ponds done by Elizabeth Karpati was reviewed.

Several separate reports were filed including the overall management plan, a separate plan for the Route 2 pedestrian/bike path, a plant list, a separate list of and invasive plants along the Route 2 Path and a Spy Pond bird list. Some minor changes were suggested by members. Overall the report is well done and all expressed their positive comments for the work Elizabeth has done.

IV. Updates/Special Projects

Symmes Redevelopment Project. Roly Chaput reported that developer E A Fish and the ARB are still working on several key issues which have not yet been resolved before a land disposition agreement can be signed. He said the Town has notified the Lahey Clinic that they must leave the site by no later than February 15th per the previously announced and court approved mandated departure date.

A question was asked about the status of developer's plans for the Vista Park on the site and Roly Chaput stated that the issue should be resolved at the ARB's next meeting on January 10th. The OSC will also remain involved in the protection and oversight of the open space on the site in conjunction with the Arlington Conservation Commission and the Arlington Land Trust which will jointly hold a conservation easement on the open space portions.

The Reservoir Dam project. There was nothing to report per Leslie Mayer who had to leave early.

Mugar land. David White reported that the developer is once again inquiring about approvals to construct on the site. No action has been taken so far. New Flood Plain maps from FEMA are expected for the site sometime this year. They are crucial to any approvals by the Arlington Conservation Commission before any work can begin.

Zoning Bylaw Review Committee. Ann LeRoy reported that the ZBRC will meet on January 11th and suggested that OSC members should attend if possible.

Mass EOEa Bio Map. There are no areas of concern in Arlington for this function.

Historic Parkways legislation sponsored by Rep. Anne Paulsen. Nothing to report at this time.

V. Other Activities

Green Streets activities are still ongoing per Elizabeth Karpati.

McClennen Park will be dedicated in the Spring of 2005.

Cleanups will be scheduled for the Spring of 2005.

The Spy Pond Committee is planning its annual fertilizer flyer for the spring.

The Cemetery Commission is still looking for new space for grave sites.

The web site address is now on the town's new URL

Traffic island maintenance issues

Goals for areas of special attention were discussed.

A Living Lawn. Roly Chaput passed around some material done by a group in Marblehead called the Organic Lawn and Garden Demonstration Project which is promoting the use of non-chemical methods to grow and maintain ornamental grasses in Massachusetts. He will follow up with similar information to Patsy Kraemer (Town Hall Gardens), and Teresa DeBenedictis (playing fields). Presentation materials would be ready for Town Day in the Fall of 2005.

The next Management Plan to be discussed in February is the Minuteman Bikeway reported by Joey Glushko.

The next regular meeting of the Open Space Committee will be held on February 2, 2005 at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall Annex building, first floor.

The meeting began at 7:35 PM and ended at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Roly Chaput